

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Child Care Facilities Licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

April 3, 2020

This frequently asked questions document is based on what is currently known about the spread and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Please check the [KDHE COVID-19 Resource Center](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19_Resource_Center.htm) ([http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19\\_Resource\\_Center.htm](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19_Resource_Center.htm)) periodically for updated information and guidance.

This document is intended for licensed child care facilities licensed by KDHE (day care homes, group day care homes, child care centers, preschools, school age programs, and drop in programs for school age children and youth). More information about KDHE Child Care Licensing is available online at <http://www.kdheks.gov/kidsnet>.

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## **Q. Why are some facilities closed and others open? 4/3/2020**

A. While KDHE supports continued child care operations, the Department recognizes that some licensees may make the difficult decision to temporarily close. Factors to consider include continued access when facilities are in buildings that have closed; personal risk/risk to family members; low attendance or limited workforce; and concerns related to ability to maintain a safe and sanitary environment for children/staff. KDHE requests that licensees notify their local licensing surveyor when temporarily closing their facility and to let the surveyor know when the facility re-opens.

## **Q. Am I required to close my facility?**

A. No. In the absence of more restrictive guidance from the state or local public health officer to prevent the spread of COVID-19, you are not required to close. However, you may choose to close based on your specific situation as stated above. Licensees are encouraged to remain in close communication with their local public health department as situations regarding COVID-19 are changing frequently. For additional information, refer to the [Interim Guidance for Child Care Facilities Licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) on the [KDHE COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

## **Q. If I am temporarily closing my licensed facility, do I need to notify anyone?**

A. Yes, please provide this update to your local licensing surveyor. Be sure to notify your local licensing surveyor when you reopen.

## **Q. If I am temporarily closing and my license is expiring, do I need to submit my renewal application? 4/3/2020**

A. Yes. A renewal application is still required to be submitted on time even if a facility is temporarily closed due to personal choice in response to the COVID-19 situation. This is necessary to avoid a lapse in the license effective date. KDHE continues to process renewal applications and issue licenses.

**Q. I am having trouble getting basic essential items needed to safely care for children (e.g. food, baby formula, toilet paper, cleaning products, wipes). Are there resources to help? 4/3/2020**

A. We recognize that in some areas access to certain foods and supplies continues to be an issue. KDHE has been working with our statewide partners to identify needs and troubleshoot solutions. Many communities are already addressing the problem locally through partnerships with local public health and emergency managers. Start by contacting your local licensing surveyor and resource and referral agency to see if they can assist you in connecting with local resources. Your local school district may also be able to connect you. The response to these needs may vary by community.

**Q. What if my temporary permit is expiring and I've not had an initial licensing survey? 4/3/2020**

A. KDHE continues to request initial surveys and issue licenses. KDHE has the authority to issue a second temporary permit when deemed necessary. If more time is needed to complete the initial survey, a second temporary permit will be issued. The current law does not allow more than two temporary permits may be issued.

**Q. Our facility is located in a school that is closed. Can we continue to operate?**

A. If a licensed facility is located in a school building that is currently closed, you will need approval from the school district and the local public health officer in order to continue operating at that location. Programs are only authorized to operate at the location printed on the license.

**Q. Can a facility licensed to operate in a school building be granted an exception to operate at an alternate location?**

A. There are no waivers or exceptions to processes or regulations in place related to the COVID-19 response. This includes issuing temporary licenses for an existing facility to operate in an alternate location.

**Q. Are we limited to caring for children of essential workers? How do we determine who is essential? May I continue to care for children of anyone who wants care? 4/3/2020**

A. KDHE has not set enrollment criteria beyond what is permitted by regulation and under the terms of your license. KDHE will not monitor parent decisions related to what is essential (work and reasons to leave home). However, the Governor's Office has provided a framework, and the statewide stay-at-home order (EO 20-16) defines

essential occupations or businesses. View the order online here: <https://governor.kansas.gov/executive-order-no-20-16/>. It is important to keep in mind that any local stay-at-home orders and/or restrictions previously in effect that extend beyond the statewide order will go back into force/effect after the statewide stay at home order expires. Local health officials have the authority to apply more restrictions to child care operations (e.g., who can be served, group size, etc.) than the state/KDHE when not otherwise stated in an Executive Order.

**Q. May I limit the number of children enrolled to fewer than what is stated on my license? 4/3/2020**

- A. The total capacity, as stated on the license, is the maximum number of children that may be present at the facility at one time. Licensees may further limit the number of children based on their own unique situation and ability to meet the health and safety needs of the children in care.

**Q. May I continue to enroll new children as long as I don't exceed my licensed capacity?**

- A. In the absence of more restrictive guidance from state or local health officials, new enrollment is permitted in accordance to the terms of the current license (ages of children, group sizes, total capacity, etc.).

**Q: Are facilities (centers and homes) limited to a capacity of 10? 4/3/2020**

- A. KDHE is not putting limits on group size for child care because the Governor's Executive Orders have exempted child care from these requirements. In the absence of more restrictive guidance from state or county public health officials, facilities may continue to operate within the terms of the current license. Local health officials may enforce more restrictive requirements to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Q. Can I get an exception to exceed my license capacity or for another reason?**

- A. As a public health matter and in order to meet goals to reduce the spread of infection, following foundational health and safety requirements are protective measures for all--child care providers/staff, the children in care, and families (caregiver's and children's). For this reason, KDHE will not be granting exceptions to exceed license capacity or eliminate other health and safety requirements related to COVID-19 response.

**Q. Can the two school age children currently enrolled in my home-based child care facility attending before and after school and on breaks stay in care for full days until the crisis has ended?**

- A. In the absence of more restrictive guidance from state or local health officials, the provisions of the existing regulation (K.A.R. 28-4-114(j)(2)) would apply. In addition to the number of children permitted under the terms of the license, K.A.R. 28-4-

114(j) authorizes two additional school age children to be present full days during an emergency school closure.

**Q. Do I need to have new employees complete the fingerprint background checks before coming to work? What if our local law enforcement agency has suspended non-criminal fingerprinting due to COVID-19? Will there be a grace period for completing fingerprints? 4/3/2020**

A. Licensees must continue to submit the necessary request for background checks for individuals working, regularly volunteering, or residing in the facility. KDHE staff are processing all work at this time, and affiliate names are being processed. For affiliates requiring comprehensive fingerprint-based checks, the automatic NORPLY email with the OCA numbers are going out. KDHE understands that there will be delays and expects completion when the situation changes. At this time, licensees may disregard the “14-day requirement” that is stated in the OCA email.

**Q. My program might be able to hire school district staff that aren’t currently working. They have already been fingerprinted by the school district; will they need to be re-printed? 4/3/2020**

A. New prints are required if staff previously working for school districts are transitioning to work in licensed child care facilities. The reason for this is that background check information cannot be shared between agencies or businesses (in this case, school and child care) and each may have specific prohibitions mandated by law. Keep in mind that individuals transferring from one licensed child care facility to another licensed facility would not need to be fingerprinted if they had previously passed a fingerprint-based background check.

**Q. I am due to renew my First Aid and CPR training soon. No one is doing in-person training right now, what am I supposed to do? 4/3/2020**

A. KDHE understands that all classroom trainings have been cancelled. Please take the First Aid and CPR training as soon as it is offered. KDHE will not hold the licensee accountable for training that isn’t available. NOTE: Many training partners are offering KDHE approved initial health and safety and on-going professional development training online.

**Q. May facilities take precautions like asking parents to stay at the door when dropping off and picking up their child? 4/3/2020**

A. Yes. In response to this outbreak, you may adopt social distancing practices intended to limit exposure to COVID-19. This may include asking parents to wait at the door or otherwise limit movement within the licensed premises. NOTE: Be sure that all parents are aware of your practice/procedure and that you apply the practice uniformly across all families. For additional information, please see the comprehensive guidance for licensed child care facilities available on the KDHE COVID-19 Resource Center.

**Q. Should I be screening new children and new staff? 4/3/2020**

- A. Yes. Strong practices for screening for signs and symptoms of illness, exclusion policies, and increased sanitation are essential. These provisions are in place in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. When enrolling new children and hiring new staff, screen by asking appropriate questions. At a minimum, consider the following:
- Has there been travel within the last 14 days in a state or country identified by KDHE as required for isolation or quarantine ([http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19\\_Resource\\_Center.htm#undefined](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19_Resource_Center.htm#undefined)) or a hot spot for COVID-19 per CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)?
  - Has there been any exposure to an individual diagnosed with COVID-19?
  - Is anyone showing signs of illness and symptoms?
    - a fever greater than 100.4 degrees (F)
    - cough
    - shortness of breath

NOTE: Be sure to remain current on the KDHE recommendations for screening as well quarantine and isolation of travelers, continuously updated on the COVID-19 Resource Center. Additional information related to screening for symptoms of illness information is included in the **Interim Guidance for Child Care Facilities** on the [COVID-19 Resource Center](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19_Resource_Center.htm) ([http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19\\_Resource\\_Center.htm](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19_Resource_Center.htm) under the *Child Care and Foster Care* tab). Additional information pertaining to isolation, quarantine, and travel is also available on the website at [http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/COVID-19\\_Isolation\\_and\\_Quarantine\\_Guidance\\_and\\_FAQ.pdf](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/COVID-19_Isolation_and_Quarantine_Guidance_and_FAQ.pdf). Information about travel guidelines is also available at [http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Travel\\_Related\\_Quarantine\\_Table\\_3-23-2020.pdf](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Travel_Related_Quarantine_Table_3-23-2020.pdf).

**Q. What about children and staff already enrolled and in attendance? Should I be screening them? 4/3/2020**

- A. Screen children and staff for signs and symptoms as outlined above before daily admittance and monitor health throughout the day. In addition to asking the questions above, observe children and staff for signs of illness and check for fever. For more information review the guidance for licensed child care facilities available on the KDHE COVID-19 Resource Center.

**Q: Is there anything specific I need to do depending on where a child lives (county) or where their parent works? 4/3/2020**

- A. In the absence of more restrictive guidance from state or county public health officials, there is nothing special a facility needs to do if children from other counties with confirmed cases are receiving care in a facility OR if children being served are

those of health care/emergency workers. The same guidance for screening for signs and symptoms of illness and exclusion apply.

**Q. When should children and staff be excluded? 4/3/2020**

- A. First, review and update your current policies for the exclusion of sick children and staff as necessary. Determine how screenings will be conducted prior to entry and how health will be monitored throughout the day. Make sure that parents of children in care and staff are aware and follow the policies.
- Individuals who have a fever or other signs of illness should not be admitted.
  - Exclude individuals with a history of COVID-19 exposure (see above) and those showing signs of illness:
    - a fever greater than 100.4 degrees (F)
    - cough
    - shortness of breath
  - Children who are sick, with the typical reasons kids get sick (vomiting, rash, diarrhea, pink eye etc.) should be excluded in accordance with your existing policies.
  - Current information about when individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should stay home is available on the COVID-19 Resource Center [http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Guidance and FAQ.pdf](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/COVID-19%20Isolation%20and%20Quarantine%20Guidance%20and%20FAQ.pdf) and on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>.

**Q. What should I do if an individual with COVID-19 has been in the facility? 4/3/2020**

- A. Immediately notify the local health department and your local licensing surveyor if someone who is infected (child, staff or resident of family child care home) has been in the licensed facility. The local health department will help determine a course of action for the facility.

**Q. Where can I find information about cleaning and disinfection procedures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including a list of approved cleaning products? 4/3/2020**

- A. To reduce the spread of illnesses, including COVID-19, it is important to intensify cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and frequently touched items, including but not limited to doorknobs, handrails, toys, and other shared items. In addition to the guidance for licensed child care facilities available on the COVID-19 Resource Center, *Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards* (<https://nrckids.org/CFOC>) has nationally recognized standards for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection of child care facilities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has detailed information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>



and a list of EPA products is available at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2b>. When choosing products be sure to read the label and carefully follow directions.

**Q. Is it OK to use bleach to sanitize or disinfect? 4/3/2020**

- A. Yes, diluted bleach may be used. However, before purchasing bleach or a bleach product read the label. Some bleaches, for example Splash-less®, are only intended for laundry use, not for sanitizing or disinfecting.

**Q. What if a parent is looking for child care and I do not have any openings?**

- A. Refer parents to the Child Care Aware website (<https://www.ks.childcareaware.org/>) or toll free number 877.678.2548 for assistance with searching for child care in their area. KDHE has an online information system that serves as a tool to support families in making informed child care choices and can be used to review compliance history of a current or potential child care provider. The online tool (<http://www.kdheks.gov/bccclr/capp.htm>) is an important step to verifying that a facility is licensed and provides compliance history for parents and guardians.

**Q. May I continue to charge fees if I am closed or if a child no longer attends due to COVID-19 concerns or stay at home orders? 4/3/2020**

- A. Providers are individual operators/licensees and set their own rates and policies regarding fee payments. KDHE and local public health officials have no authority to set rates or limits on fees.

**Q. Are there financial supports for child care facilities to assist with loss of income due to COVID-19? 4/3/2020**

- A. Recent federal legislation, the CARES Act, provides several forms of economic relief for small businesses, including child care.
- Kansas Department of Commerce <https://www.kansascommerce.gov/covid-19-response/> has information about grants/loans to assist with payroll and ongoing business expenses.
  - Kansas Department of Labor <https://www.dol.ks.gov/covid19response> has information about employment assistance.

**Q. I have questions regarding the Department for Children and Families child care subsidy program policies. Who should I contact? 4/3/2020**

- A. Please contact your DCF Provider Enrollment staff or call 1.822.765.2003.

**Q. Have there been changes to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) due to COVID-19? 4/3/2020**

- A. The CACFP program utilized by many licensed child care facilities is administered through the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). Current information

about the program, including guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic, is available at [https://www.kn-eat.org/CACFP/CACFP\\_Menus/CACFP\\_What's\\_New.html](https://www.kn-eat.org/CACFP/CACFP_Menus/CACFP_What's_New.html).

**Q. How do I contact my local child care licensing surveyor?**

A. For more information about local licensing contacts, visit the [KDHE Child Care Licensing](#) website and click on *Local County Contacts*.

**Q. I am not currently licensed. Can I get an emergency or temporary license?**

A. There are no waivers or exceptions to processes or regulations in place related to COVID-19 response. This includes issuing a temporary license. For more information about applying to become licensed, contact your local licensing surveyor to start the process. For more information about local licensing contacts, visit the [KDHE Child Care Licensing](#) website and click on *Local County Contacts*. NOTE: a license is not required for 1) children receiving care in their own home; or 2) children cared for by relatives. Additionally, anyone (friend, neighbor, teacher not working) can care for up to 2 children less than 20 hours a week.